

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-20

AGR-20 SCEM-02 DRC-01 (ISO) W
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R 221200Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4972

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 2282

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, MT,US

SUBJ: MEETING WITH MINTOFF NOVEMBER 22.

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF ASKED AMBASSADOR TO CALL LATE EVENING NOVEMBER 22, HE RAISED THREE SUBJECTS: TERMINATION OF PL480 ITILE II PROGRAM; EXCESS PROPERTY PROGRAM; AND MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. DISCUSSION WAS LOW-KEY AND MINTOFF WAS CORDIAL THROUGHOUT MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR EVENING OF NOVEMBER 22, FOR WHICH MINTOFF CAME OUT OF PARLIAMENTARY SITING, FIRST ITEM ON HIS AGENDA WAS TERMINATION OF PL480 TITLE II PROGRAM AT END OF FY 1974. MINTOFF WAS, OF COURSE, UNHAPPY AT THIS PROSPECT, BUT INSTEAD OF ASKING FOR CONTINUATION OF EXISTING LEVEL HE PLEADED FOR TAPERING OFF OVER PERIOD OF TWO YEARS RATHER THAN ABRUPT CUT -OFF. HE DID NOT CONTEST AMBASSADOR'S EXPLANATION OF AVAILABILITIES AND PRIORITIES. FACT THAT SIX COUNTRIES WERE TERMINATED THIS YEAR AND NINE MORE IN ADDITION TO MALTA WOULD BE TERMINATED NEXT YEAR WAS MOST HELPFUL ARGUMENT. ALTHOUGH AMBASSADOR GAVE HIM NO HOPE THAT HIS REQUEST COULD BE MET, MINTOFF SAID HE WOULD

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MAKE HIS CASE IN LETTER TO SECRETARY WHICH HE WOULD TRANSMIT

THROUGH EMBASSY.

3. SECOND ITEM WAS REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE REGARDING SEVERAL ITEMS WHICH MALTA HOPES TO OBTAIN THROUGH EXCESS PROPERTY PROGRAM(WE WILL EXAMINE THIS AND COMMUNICATE SEPARATELY). IN RAISING SUBJECT, MINTOFF EXPRESSED HIS REAL GRATITUDE FOR WHAT MALTA HAS RECEIVED UNDER EXCESS PROGRAM, AND POINTED WITH PRIDE TO EFFECTIVE USE BEING MADE OF THIS EQUIPMENT.

4. LASTLY MINTOFF DELIVERED HIS NEWS ON MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. IN SUMMARY, HE ARGUED THAT PROGRESS MUST BE MADE WHILE MODERATE ELEMENTS ON ARAB SIDE ARE IN POSITION OF CONTROL EVENTS. "PROGRESS", IN MINTOFF'S WORDS MEANS THAT THE ISRAELIS MUST RETURN TO THE PRE-1967 BOUNDARIES "WITHOUT TOO MUCH QUIBBLING". HE BRUSHES ASIDE QUESTION OF SECURITY GUARANTEES FOR ISRAEL ON GROUNDS THEY WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY AFTER WITHDRAWAL.

5. COMMENT: RELATIVE MILDNESS OF MINTOFF'S PL480 DEMARCHE MAY HAVE BEEN IN PART DUE TO FACT THAT NEXT ITEM ON HIS LIST WAS REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE WITH EXCESS PROPERTY PROGRAM. BUT HE ALSO MUST REALIZE THAT MALTA'S NEEDS COMPARED TO AREAS OF STARVATION AND REAL DISTRESS ARE HARD TO JUSTIFY. THERE ARE, NONETHELESS, DESERVING RECIPIENTS ON MALTA, AND MINTOFF ARGUED THAT HIS EFFORTS TO HOLD DOWN COST-OF-LIVING ARE ONLY PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL. IN LIGHT OF THIS, WE HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT CAN WEIGH POSSIBILITY OF CUTTING PROGRAM IN HALF FOR FY 1975 WITH COMPLETE TERMINATION TO TAKE EFFECT IN JUNE 1975.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT MINTOFF DID NOT RAISE ESSO QUESTION. OF WHICH HE MUST BE AWARE BY THIS TIME. MINTOFF WAS ENTIRELY CORDIAL THROUGHOUT MEETING.GETZ

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